KODANSHA COMICS

CHAPTER 171

KEI SASUGA

CHAPTER 171: YET LIFE GOES ON

KEI SASUGA

SUMIREGAWA FIREWORKS DISPLAY
菫川花火大会
VENUE
会場

I HEAR YOU USUALLY HAVE TO RESERVE THEM.
MAYBE WE SHOULD TRY TO SNAG SOME SEATS.

HUH?
YEAH, BUT THOSE ARE USUALLY MARKED AND...

YAKISOBA
やきそば
FRIED CHICKEN
からあげ
THERE ARE FOOD STALLS!
LOOK!

WOW!
IT'S PACKED!

SO
GOOD!♡
GRILLED SQUID

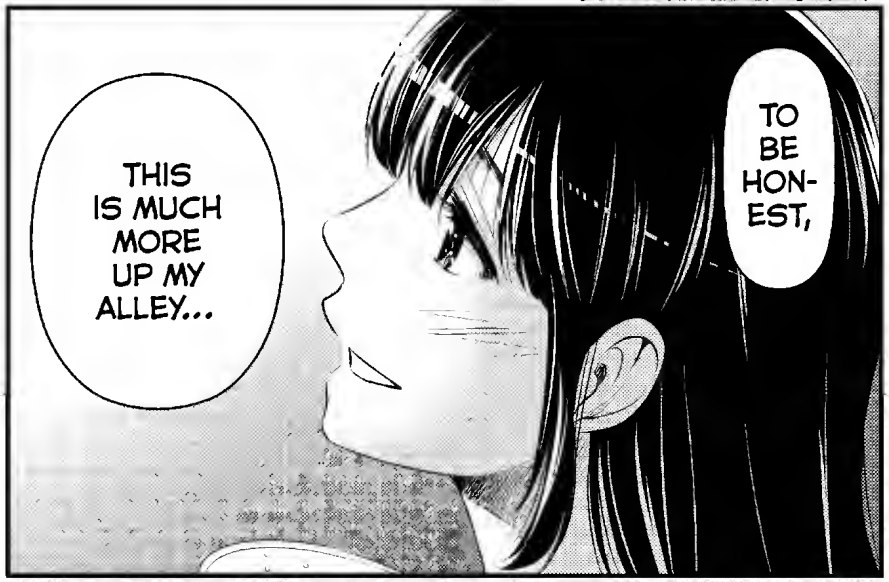
IT'S GOOD ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU QUESTION EVOLUTION?
WHY ARE THEY SO GOOD?!
THEY SHOULD MAKE THEMSELVES TASTE WORSE IF THEY DON'T WANNA GET EATEN!
WHAT'S WITH SQUIDS, ANYWAY?!
はぐ
MRF

DRY BEER
生ビール
PERFECT!

I SPY SOMETHING THAT'LL GO GREAT WITH THAT SQUID.
SAY, MISS.

I WONDER WHY. MAYBE IT'S THE FESTIVAL ATMOSPHERE.
IT TASTES FIVE TIMES BETTER THAN USUAL!

NATSUO-KUN... I CAN'T WAIT FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE THIS JOY TOO!
BEER AND GRILLED SQUID REALLY ARE A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN! I THINK I'M GONNA CRY...!
I'M FINE WITH GINGER ALE.
ぷはーっ
AAAH


TO BE HON-EST,
THIS IS MUCH MORE UP MY ALLEY...

AHH...
THIS IS THE BEST.

GOLDFISH SCOOP
金魚すくい
THERE'S A GOLDFISH SCOOPING STALL!

...
OH!

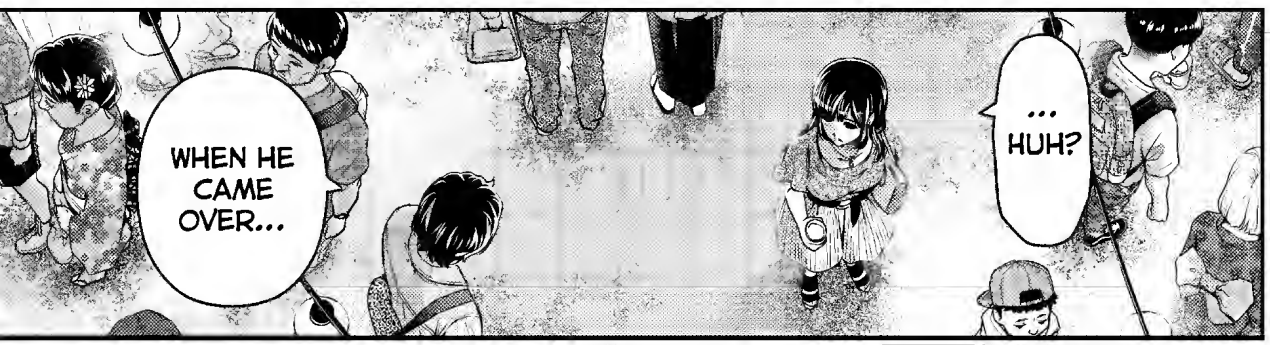
I WON'T! I'M NOT WEARING A YUKATA TODAY.
NYEH
JUST DON'T DROP YOUR PHONE IN AGAIN, OKAY?
UH, OH. YOU FOUND IT.
YOU BET I DID.
ONE ROUND, SIR!
IT FELL OUT OF MY SLEEVE LAST TI–
GYAAAH!
SPLOSH
WHAT'D I JUST SAY?!
I'LL HOLD YOUR BEER AND STUFF.
HUH?
JUST PUT IT IN MY BAG. YOU SHOULD PLAY, TOO, NATSUO-KUN!
LUCKILY, MY NEW ONE'S WATERPROOF. ♪
THANK GOD FOR TECHNO-LOGICAL ADVANCE-MENTS, HUH?
THAT FACE IS KINDA IRRITATING...
LET'S HAVE A LITTLE COMPETI-TION.
HUH...? BUT AREN'T YOU A MASTER AT THIS?

HUP!
ER...
IT'S KINDA HARD WHEN YOU HAVEN'T DONE IT IN A...
SLI
SHA
AH!
FWIP
FWIP
FWIP
FWIP
FWIP
... WHILE.
NICE SCOOP-ING, MISSY!
I COMPETED IN A GOLDFISH SCOOPING COMPETITION IN HIGH SCHOOL.
GLINT
キリッ
I DON'T EVEN STAND A CHANCE!
SHMUP
たんま!!
YOU DON'T TAKE THE FISH HOME?

I'M JUST GLAD I GOT TO SCRATCH MY GOLDFISH SCOOP-ING ITCH!
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
WHAT SORTA ITCH IS THAT?
...BUT THEY NEVER LIVED FOR VERY LONG.
NAH.
WHEN I WAS LITTLE I ASKED MY PARENTS TO BUY ME A TANK AND STUFF SO I COULD KEEP THEM...
I SEE.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE ...
WHAT ABOUT YOUR DATES...?
TRUTH BE TOLD,
TANABE-SAN...
...ASKED ME OUT TO DINNER AGAIN THIS WEEK.
...SINCE I'VE HAD THIS MUCH FUN!

HUH?
BUT I TURNED HIM DOWN.
NOW THAT YOU'VE MET HIM,
WHAT DID YOU THINK OF TANABE-SAN, NATSUO-KUN?
THUMP ドキッ
HE SEEMED LIKE...
...A GOOD PER-SON.
BUT...

IS THERE ...
...SOMETHING BUGGING YOU, HINA-NEE?


WHEN HE CAME OVER...
... HUH?

I DUNNO IF I'D SAY SOMETHING'S BUGGING ME, EXACTLY.
I'M JUST KIND OF CONFUSED.

...YOUR OLD HABIT...
...OF LOOKING TO THE SIDE WHEN YOU'RE TRYING TO HIDE YOUR FEELINGS RESURFACED.

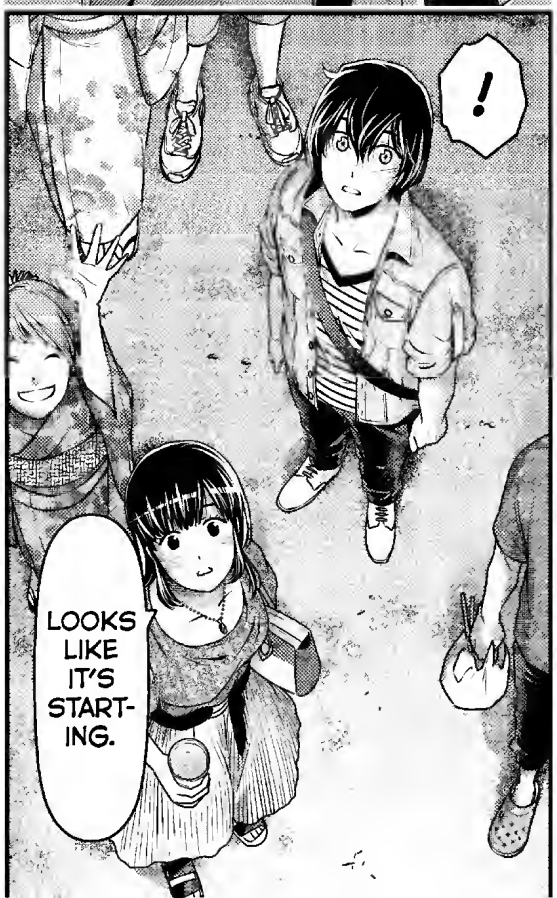
IT'S LIKE...
...MY FEELINGS HAVEN'T REALLY CAUGHT UP YET.
HE'S GENERALLY POSITIVE AND A GOOD PERSON, LIKE YOU SAID.
BUT IT'S JUST KIND OF EXHAUSTING THE WAY HE KEEPS REACHING OUT BEFORE I HAVE A CHANCE TO MAKE A MOVE, Y'KNOW?
WHEN HE ASKED TO COME OVER THE OTHER DAY,
I SAID NO AT FIRST.
I MEAN, WE'RE NOT EVEN OFFICIALLY DATING OR ANYTHING.
BUT...
...I'M SURE I ONLY AGREED BECAUSE I THOUGHT HE'D BE UPSTAIRS WRITING.
BUT HE JUST KEPT INSISTING...
NATSUO-KUN'S AT THE HOUSE, TOO.

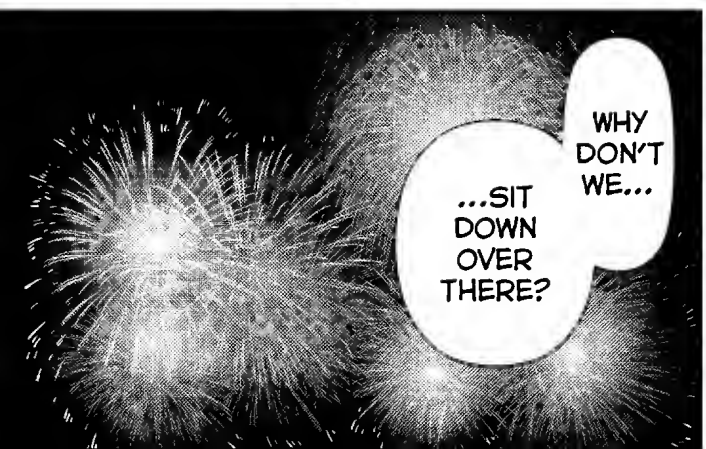
...
WELL, THAT SAID ...
I KEEP TELLING HIM I'M FINE WITH GOING OUT TO NORMAL PUBS AND STUFF,
BUT HE ALWAYS TAKES ME TO REALLY PRICY RESTAU-RANTS.
AND WHEN I TRY TO PAY HALF THE BILL, HE WON'T LET ME,
SO I JUST FEEL GUILTY.
I MEAN, DID YOU SEE HOW HAPPY MY MOM WAS?
I THINK SHE REALLY LIKES TANABE-SAN.
AND EVERYONE SEEMS TO THINK HE'S A GOOD PERSON.
...I PROBABLY JUST HAVE TO GET USED TO IT.
HON-ESTLY,
IT'D PROBABLY BE FOR THE BEST IF WE JUST GET MARRIED.
SCREW THAT.

IF YOU'RE GONNA GET MARRIED WITH THAT KIND OF ATTITUDE ...
...THEN I'M A HUNDRED PERCENT AGAINST IT.

HUH ...?
I MEAN, THAT'S JUST RIDICU-LOUS.
YOU SHOULDN'T GET MARRIED JUST BECAUSE EVERYONE'S PUSHING FOR IT. ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE NOT SURE YOU EVEN WANT TO.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS WHAT'S BEST FOR YOUR FUTURE, HINA-NEE. NO ONE ELSE.
WHAT MATTERS MOST IS THAT *YOU* MAKE THE DECISION WHEN YOU'RE READY, RIGHT?
AFTER ALL, MORE THAN ANYONE ...
...I WANT YOU TO BE–

BOOM


!
LOOKS LIKE IT'S START-ING.


WHY DON'T WE...
...SIT DOWN OVER THERE?

THEY'RE SO PRETTY!
THE ONES THAT CHANGE COLOR ARE COOL, HUH?
FIRST, THEY RISE, THEN SCAT-TER,
CHANG-ING FROM RED TO BLUE...

HINA-
NEE...

PAT ぽん
PAT ぽん
YOU JUST ...
...LOOKED SO HELP-LESS.
SORRY.
...!
IF YOU'RE EVER WORRIED, RUI AND I ARE HERE FOR YOU.
YOU CAN TALK TO US ABOUT ANYTHING.
AND IF IT'S TOO HARD TO TALK TO TSUKIKO-SAN,
I CAN TRY TO DROP A HINT FOR YOU...
THANKS.
JUST KNOWING THAT MAKES ME FEEL BETTER.

BOO HOO
WHAT A HEARTLESS LITTLE BROTHER! AND HERE I AM, WORRYING MYSELF SICK...
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT!
WHAT, IS THAT IT?
HUH ?
GREAT.
I'M SORRY, RUI.
FOR-GIVE ME.
JUST FOR NOW,
LET ME STAY LIKE THIS.